

# THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

## Message 1: Whatever Happened to Holiness?

They shut the road through the woods  
Seventy years ago.  
Weather and rain have undone it again  
And now you would never know  
There once was a way through the woods.  
- Rudyard Kipling, *The Way Through the Woods*

### What happened to holiness?

Adapted from *The Hole in Our Holiness*, by Kevin DeYoung (2012):

- 1) In the past, holiness was equated with certain \_\_\_\_\_ ...  
Therefore ...
- 2) Holiness has been equated with a \_\_\_\_\_, or moral 'golden age' ...  
Therefore ...
- 3) Churches have many \_\_\_\_\_ in them ...
- 4) The "culture of cool" ...
- 5) Among more liberal Christians, the pursuit of holiness is often seen as \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ ...
- 6) Among more conservative Christians, we fear confusing \_\_\_\_\_ (what God has done) with \_\_\_\_\_ (what we must do) lest we distort the gospel ...
- 7) Holiness is plain \_\_\_\_\_, and we are often \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8) Many Christians have simply \_\_\_\_\_ because we think it is impossible, so why even try ...

## Hebrews 12:14 (ESV)

<sup>14</sup> Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

## What *is* holiness?

From the classic, *Holiness*, by John Charles Ryle (1879):

### The Nature of True Practical Holiness:

- 1) Holiness is the habit of being of one mind with God ...
- 2) Holiness shuns sin and desires to keep every commandment ...
- 3) Holiness strives to follow the example of Christ ...
- 4) Holiness cultivates the passive graces ...
- 5) Holiness pursues temperance and self-denial ...
- 6) Holiness practices love and brotherly kindness ...
- 7) Holiness practices mercy and benevolence ...
- 8) Holiness is exemplified in purity of heart ...
- 9) Holiness follows after the fear of God ...
- 10) Holiness follows after humility ...
- 11) Holiness follows after faithfulness in the duties of life ...
- 12) Holiness follows after spiritual mindedness ...

## Importance of Practical Holiness

- 1) God commands it
- 2) Holiness is the \_\_\_\_\_ for which Christ came into the world
- 3) Holiness is the evidence of \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Holiness is the evidence of \_\_\_\_\_ for Christ
- 5) Holiness is the evidence of being \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) Holiness contributes to the \_\_\_\_\_ of others
- 7) Holiness produces present \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) Holiness prepares us for \_\_\_\_\_

### 3 guiding truths:

1) We have an \_\_\_\_\_ for Holiness via the New Birth, but it must be \_\_\_\_\_ through obedient practice.

#### 2 Corinthians 7:1 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.

#### Galatians 2:20 (ESV)

<sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

#### 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (ESV)

<sup>9</sup> Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,  
<sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.  
<sup>11</sup> And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

#### Romans 8:5-14 (ESV)

<sup>5</sup> For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.  
<sup>6</sup> For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.  
<sup>7</sup> For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.  
<sup>8</sup> Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.  
<sup>9</sup> You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.  
<sup>10</sup> But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.  
<sup>11</sup> If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.  
<sup>12</sup> So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.  
<sup>13</sup> For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.  
<sup>14</sup> For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

#### Ephesians 4:1 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,

2) Learning holiness is a \_\_\_\_\_ that includes ...

#### Hebrews 5:7-10 (ESV)

<sup>7</sup> In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence.  
<sup>8</sup> Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered.  
<sup>9</sup> And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him,  
<sup>10</sup> being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

#### Hebrews 12:7 (ESV)

<sup>7</sup> It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

#### Galatians 5:24 (ESV)

<sup>24</sup> And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

**James 1:25 (ESV)**

<sup>25</sup> But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

**1 Timothy 6:11-12 (ESV)**

<sup>11</sup> But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. <sup>12</sup> Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

**James 5:16 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

3) The process of learning and living holiness requires both \_\_\_\_\_ (our part) and \_\_\_\_\_ (His part).

**Titus 2:11-12 (ESV)**

<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, <sup>12</sup> training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age ...

**Philippians 2:12-13 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, <sup>13</sup> for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

**Galatians 5:16-18 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. <sup>17</sup> For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. <sup>18</sup> But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

**2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, <sup>17</sup> comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.

**CONCLUSION:** Why did God save me?

**Ephesians 1:3-6 (ESV)**

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, <sup>4</sup> even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love <sup>5</sup> he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.